



# City of Seattle

Seattle Police Department

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September 15, 2016

Director Pierce Murphy  
Office of Professional Accountability  
720 Third Avenue, 18<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Seattle, WA 98104

Re: Management Action Recommendation (2016OPA-0128)

Dear Director Murphy:

I am writing in response to your August 25, 2016, management action recommendations arising out of your review of an incident wherein it was alleged that SPD officers encouraged a burglary victim to arrange a meeting with a person believed to be selling the victim's stolen property, for the stated purpose of recovering the stolen property. The victim did so, but when the victim called 911 for assistance, no officers were available to immediately respond. Apparently, during a confrontation between the victim and the seller, the seller brandished a handgun.

I share your concern about this particular incident, and I too am relieved that no one was hurt. It is not my understanding that this has been a *de facto* practice outside of highly controlled and coordinated investigations by specialized teams and detectives, but to the extent it has been, I have directed the precinct commanders to ensure that it is immediately discontinued. At the same time, we know from experience that, when properly planned, investigations that incorporate meetings between victims and sellers of stolen property have been successful in reuniting burglary victims with property they might otherwise not have recovered. To ensure that any such arrangements are appropriately screened, coordinated, and staffed, the Audit, Policy and Research Section is finalizing a draft policy to govern circumstances and protocols when specialized teams, officers or detectives may coordinate with cooperating victims to recover stolen property, and to assure appropriate supervisory oversight at all stages of the process. Consistent with our protocol, that policy will be submitted to the Monitoring Team and the Department of Justice for their review prior to publication.

Please let me know if you would like to discuss further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Kathleen M. O'Toole".

Kathleen M. O'Toole  
Chief of Police

Cc: Deputy Chief Carmen Best  
Brian Maxey, Chief Operating Officer  
Assistant Chief Leslie Cordner  
Rebecca Boatright, Senior Counsel